Professional standards for assisting teaching

Welcome to these pages which will help guide you through the professional standards for assisting teaching. The standards are part of a range of standards for teachers, leaders and those who assist teaching. They have been designed to support you to be the best you can be and they reflect practice that is consistent with the realisation of the new curriculum.

From 1 September 2019 the standards will be available for use by all teaching assistants (TAs) and higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) to reflect on their practice and identify professional learning.
Making best use of this interactive PDF
A new model for professional standards
Who will use them and when?
Overarching values and dispositions
The five professional standards for assisting teaching
Descriptors for assisting teaching

Mae’r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh
Making best use of this interactive PDF

You will need a mouse or pointer to click on features which allow you to choose how to navigate the pages.

The standards section is intended to be interactive – click on titles and symbols in the main pages to explore the standards in your own way.

Clicking on each of the five standards will take you to a breakdown of elements within each standard.

Clicking on the element headings will take you to the descriptors for that element.

Pages with a yellow tab relate to the assisting teaching descriptors.

Clicking on icons in the bottom right corner of pages will allow you to return to earlier pages, or navigate between each of the five standards.

The descriptor pages have an icon which will take you back to the element breakdown of that standard, where you will also find links to enable you to go to the ‘Five professional standards for assisting teaching’ page.

The home icon will take you back to the contents page.
After working with TAs, HLTAs, teachers and leaders across Wales, we have five professional standards for assisting teaching for TAs and HLTAs with an overarching set of values and dispositions which should drive everyone who works with learners. The standards concentrate on the essential elements of assisting teaching – pedagogy, collaboration, leadership, innovation and professional learning – and will underpin the development of the significant part of our school workforce that assists teaching, contributing to the transformation of our education system in Wales. The new standards have been developed with the profession, for the profession, to be relevant to the day-to-day work of those assisting teaching.

Each standard is divided into elements with descriptors that exemplify how the standards could apply to their work depending on where they are in terms of their role and career.

The lower descriptors exemplify effective practice.

The upper descriptors exemplify sustained highly effective practice.

TAs seeking HLTA status should be demonstrating sustained highly-effective practice in the relevant descriptors before undertaking the HLTA scheme and if successful, being awarded HLTA status.
Who will use them and when?

This set of professional standards for assisting teaching will be introduced from September 2019.

Beneath each of the five standards there are a number of elements supported by a range of descriptors. These are for practitioners to explore in a developmental way – not as a checklist – by showing what sustained highly effective practice looks like.

Those assisting teaching will be able to use the EWC’s Professional Learning Passport (PLP) to reflect on their professional experiences and map them to the professional standards for assisting teaching.

You can begin to explore the professional standards on the next page.
Overarching values and dispositions

Driving everyone who works with learners to exhibit high professional standards in their practice.

Values and dispositions

- Welsh language and culture
- Rights of learners
- Literacy, numeracy and digital competence
- The professional learner
- The system role
- Professional entitlement

Professional standards for assisting teaching
Overarching values and dispositions

The TA has a professional right to be part of a school that sees itself as a learning organisation. The TA has the autonomy to be a contributing part of a local, national and global profession and has the right to instigate and support improvement to the school to the benefit of learners.

The TA is committed to learners everywhere and is an influential part of a developing and coherent education culture in Wales.

The TA is a professional learner and commits to continuous engagement in career long development, collaboration and innovation.

The TA consistently emphasises the central importance of the promotion of Welsh culture and language. Learners will be supported in gaining skills across all areas of learning and every opportunity will be taken to extend learners’ skills and competence.

The needs and rights of learners will be central and take priority in the teaching assistant’s approach to their job. The TA exhibits high expectations and commitment to the achievement of each learner.

The TA consistently emphasises the central importance of literacy, numeracy and digital competence. Learners will be supported in gaining skills across all areas of learning and every opportunity will be taken to extend learners’ skills and competence.

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Professional standards for assisting teaching
The five professional standards for assisting teaching

- Pedagogy
- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Professional Learning
The five professional standards for assisting teaching
The five professional standards for assisting teaching

...allows it to spread

- Collaboration
- Pedagogy
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Professional Learning
The five professional standards for assisting teaching

...takes it deeper
The five professional standards for assisting teaching

...moves it forward
The five professional standards for assisting teaching

- Leadership
- Pedagogy
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Professional Learning

...helps it grow
The five professional standards for assisting teaching

Working as one…
to secure effective pedagogy with overarching values and dispositions
Five professional standards for assisting teaching

**Pedagogy… teaching and learning is paramount**
Support for the teacher and learners is focused upon learning outcomes and well-being. The TA is an integral member of the team, providing learning opportunities and acting as a role model. The influence on learners themselves is positive, building their disposition to learning and increasing their capacity to access learning as appropriate.

In addition, the HLTA provides leadership for learners and other TAs and undertakes effective planning, delivery and assessment.

**Collaboration… allows pedagogy to spread**
The TA works with colleagues at all levels to achieve the aims of the school. There is an outlook of expectation that includes working effectively with colleagues from other schools and with families or other partners in learning.

In addition, the HLTA plans and shapes effective collaboration.

**Leadership… helps pedagogy grow**
The TA takes responsibility for their role in supporting teachers’ accountability and the progress of specified learners. There is an active drive to support leadership of teams or the school contributing fully to seeking the best outcomes for learners.

In addition, the HLTA consistently leads colleagues in the provision of support to teachers and learners. Through supporting the development of TAs, they positively influence the outcomes for learners.

**Innovation… moves pedagogy forward**
The TA explores new ideas and techniques and joins with the school’s efforts to carefully implement new approaches to learning and teaching.

In addition, the HLTA seeks new ideas and techniques and provides impetus to the school’s efforts to carefully implement new approaches to learning and teaching.

**Professional learning… takes pedagogy deeper**
The TA strives to develop new knowledge and skills that benefit learners by taking an active role in the school as a learning community. There is positive engagement in learning activity that supports the needs of the school or specified learners.

In addition, the HLTA has achieved literacy and numeracy skills at Level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework. They have also successfully completed the professional learning required to hold HLTA status.
Descriptors for assisting teaching
Expectations of assisting teaching

Effective practice

Sustained highly-effective practice
Expectations of assisting teaching

Click on a segment to explore the standards for assisting teaching.
The standard
Support for the teacher and learners is focused upon learning outcomes and well-being. The TA is an integral member of the team providing learning opportunities and is a role model. The influence on learners themselves is positive, building their disposition to learning and increasing their capacity to access learning as appropriate.

In addition, the HLTA provides leadership for learners and other TAs and undertakes effective planning, delivery and assessment.

Unpacking pedagogy… fitting with ‘Successful Futures’
Pedagogy

Refining teaching…assisting effectiveness and efficiency

Click on element headings to view descriptors.

Managing the learning environment
Helping with assessment
Helping to provide appropriate resources
Involving families in learning
Pedagogy

Refining teaching…assisting effectiveness and efficiency

Managing the learning environment

Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:
The TA takes responsibility for the maintenance of aspects of the learning environment to a high standard and for improving aspects as necessary.

Effective practice descriptor:
The TA supports the teacher in making the learning environment efficient, effective and dynamic in terms of organisation and promoting learning in line with the school’s vision.
Pedagogy

Refining teaching…assisting effectiveness and efficiency

Helping with assessment

Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:
Extended and in-depth conversations are held with identified groups of learners in order to inform assessment of progress for the teacher.

Effective practice descriptor:
The TA makes relevant observations about learner strengths or difficulties and draws these to the attention of the teacher.
Pedagogy

Refining teaching…assisting effectiveness and efficiency

Helping to provide the appropriate resources

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
Differentiated resources are systematically organised, appropriate to the needs of the different learners.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
Resources are well organised and maintained to support learning.
Pedagogy

Refining teaching…assisting effectiveness and efficiency

Involving families in learning

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA helps to develop strong and productive relationships with families, collectively and individually, enabling understanding and support for learning.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA supports learning by helping to build an effective link between home and school.
Pedagogy

Advancing learning…enabling impact

Click on element headings to view descriptors.

Four purposes for learners
Real life, authentic contexts
Linking subjects and themes
Helping learners make progress

Professional standards for assisting teaching
Four purposes for learners

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
Insights and suggestions for extending the development of the four purposes result in improved impact on the quality of teaching and learning outcomes.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes every opportunity to support the development of the four purposes within the learning of all learners.
**Pedagogy**

**Advancing learning…enabling impact**

**Real life, authentic contexts**

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**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA uses initiative to take opportunities to link learning of concepts, skills and knowledge to the local community and wider world.

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**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA offers suggestions to teachers for linking learning to the world beyond the classroom, from the local community to the wider world.
Pedagogy

Advancing learning…enabling impact

Linking subjects and themes

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA helps teaching which links subjects together in cross-curricular themes.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA helps to ensure that the essence of subject disciplines is addressed while supporting subject teaching.
Pedagogy

Advancing learning…enabling impact

Helping learners make progress

Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:
The TA promotes the school’s vision for learning and ensures progression for all learners across the four purposes through formal and intuitive interventions.

Effective practice descriptor:
The TA supports the teacher’s efforts to ensure the effectiveness of planned learning in practice and progression for all learning.
Pedagogy

Influencing learners…assisting their positive outlook

Click on element headings to view descriptors.

Observing learners
Listening to learners
Learners leading learning
Helping to build effort in learners
Learning outcomes and well-being
Pedagogy

Influencing learners…assisting their positive outlook

Observing learners

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA is able to observe specific groups of learners to determine the level of genuine challenge and expectation to help the teacher to more effectively target learning.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA is able to support teaching by making secure observations about the way learners address tasks and what helps or inhibits their learning.
Pedagogy

Influencing learners…assisting their positive outlook

Listening to learners

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA manages structured in-depth learning conversations and offers informed understandings to help teachers plan next steps.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
Teaching is assisted through working directly with specified groups of learners to enable understanding of success, difficulty and achievement.
Pedagogy

Influencing learners…assisting their positive outlook

Learners leading learning

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA is able to use formal and informal conversations to enable learners to appreciate their suggestions and use their ideas productively.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA is able to include learners’ suggestions, in planning and spontaneously, to drive ownership of learning.
Pedagogy

Influencing learners…assisting their positive outlook

Helping to build effort in learners

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes opportunities to reflect with learners and recognises and encourages sustained effort in aspects of learning.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
Every day and each activity is approached in a positive way to model attitudes to learning and demonstrate effort, resilience and creativity.
Pedagogy

Influencing learners...assisting their positive outlook

Learning outcomes and well-being

Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:
Planned learning intentions are clear for all in the teaching team and the TA supports the teacher in striving for the best outcomes for each learner.

Effective practice descriptor:
An infectious enthusiasm for the process of learning is consistently and continuously promoted.
Collaboration

The standard

The TA works with colleagues at all levels to achieve the aims of the school. There is an outlook of expectation that includes working effectively with colleagues from other schools and with families or other partners in learning.

In addition, the HLTA plans and shapes effective collaboration.

Click on element headings to view descriptors.

Seeking advice and support

Working with in-school colleagues

Supporting and developing others
Collaboration

Seeking advice and support

Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:
There is regular and structured engagement in open and honest communication as part of the teaching team, to the benefit of learners.

Effective practice descriptor:
The TA engages in dialogue about effectiveness and uses appropriate advice.
Collaboration

Working with in-school colleagues

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA is an integral part of the teaching team and contributes perceptively to planning and evaluation.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
Assisting teaching leads to insights being offered to support the teacher’s own reflection on practice.
Collaboration

Supporting and developing others

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
Formal and informal contributions help to refine strategies and techniques to the benefit of all learners.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA supports colleagues to spread expertise.
Professional learning

The standard

The TA strives to develop new knowledge and skills that benefit learners by taking an active role in the school as a learning community. There is positive engagement in learning activity that supports the needs of the school or specified learners.

In addition, the HLTA has achieved literacy and numeracy skills at Level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework. They have also successfully completed the professional learning required to hold HLTA status.

Click on element headings to view descriptors.

Reading and exploring research findings

Professional networks and communities

Welsh language and culture
Professional learning

Reading and exploring research findings

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes responsibility for extending understandings of practice through consideration of literature and research.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA reads, considers and acts on appropriate literature about learning.
Professional learning

Professional networks and communities

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA extends understanding and practice by structured learning with colleagues in other schools.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes opportunities to attend courses and share experience and knowledge with other colleagues in school.
Professional learning

Welsh language and culture

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes steps to increase their own Welsh language abilities and encourages enthusiasm among learners.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes steps to increase their own Welsh language abilities and makes effort to show learners the excitement of learning the Welsh language and understanding Welsh culture and history.
Innovation

The standard
The TA explores new ideas and techniques and joins with the school’s efforts to carefully implement new approaches to learning and teaching.

In addition, the HLTA seeks new ideas and techniques and provides impetus to the school’s efforts to carefully implement new approaches to learning and teaching.

Click on element headings to view descriptors.
Extending expertise of the team
Evaluating the impact of changes in pedagogy
Innovation

Extending expertise of the team

Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor: The TA makes their expertise and support available to colleagues who are trying something new in their repertoire of teaching techniques.

Effective practice descriptor: The TA is receptive to considering and trying new approaches in their own work.
Innovation

Evaluating the impact of changes in pedagogy

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA supports new approaches in pedagogy and assists the understanding of improvement in learning.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA is fully involved in recording, reporting and reflecting upon changes in practice.
Leadership

The standard

The TA takes responsibility for their role in supporting teachers’ accountability and the progress of specified learners. There is an active drive to support leadership of teams or the school contributing fully to seeking the best outcomes for learners.

In addition, the HLTA consistently leads colleagues in the provision of support to teachers and learners. Through supporting the development of TAs, they positively influence the outcomes for learners.

Click on element headings to view descriptors.

- Taking responsibility for self
- Exercising corporate responsibility
- Leading colleagues, projects and programmes
- Leading learning-related events
Taking responsibility for self

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA extends knowledge, understanding and skills in order to become more proficient.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA accepts responsibility for the role and demonstrates their commitment to learners through professional organisation and management.
Leadership

Exercising corporate responsibility

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA supports colleagues to understand and adhere to official policies.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA complies with agreed policies and seeks advice where necessary.
Leadership

Leading colleagues, projects and programmes

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA takes a leadership role with other assistants in specific projects and is seen to have a positive influence on the success of learning.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA leads elements of projects and programmes to develop learning in a range of aspects of school life.
Leadership

Leading learning-related events

**Sustained highly-effective practice descriptor:**
The TA organises events to promote the school and to extend the reach of the learning to the wider community.

**Effective practice descriptor:**
The TA provides support to events to promote and develop learning in the school.